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THE INDIAN MAHOMEDANS

AND

THE GOVERNMENT.


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THE ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE,

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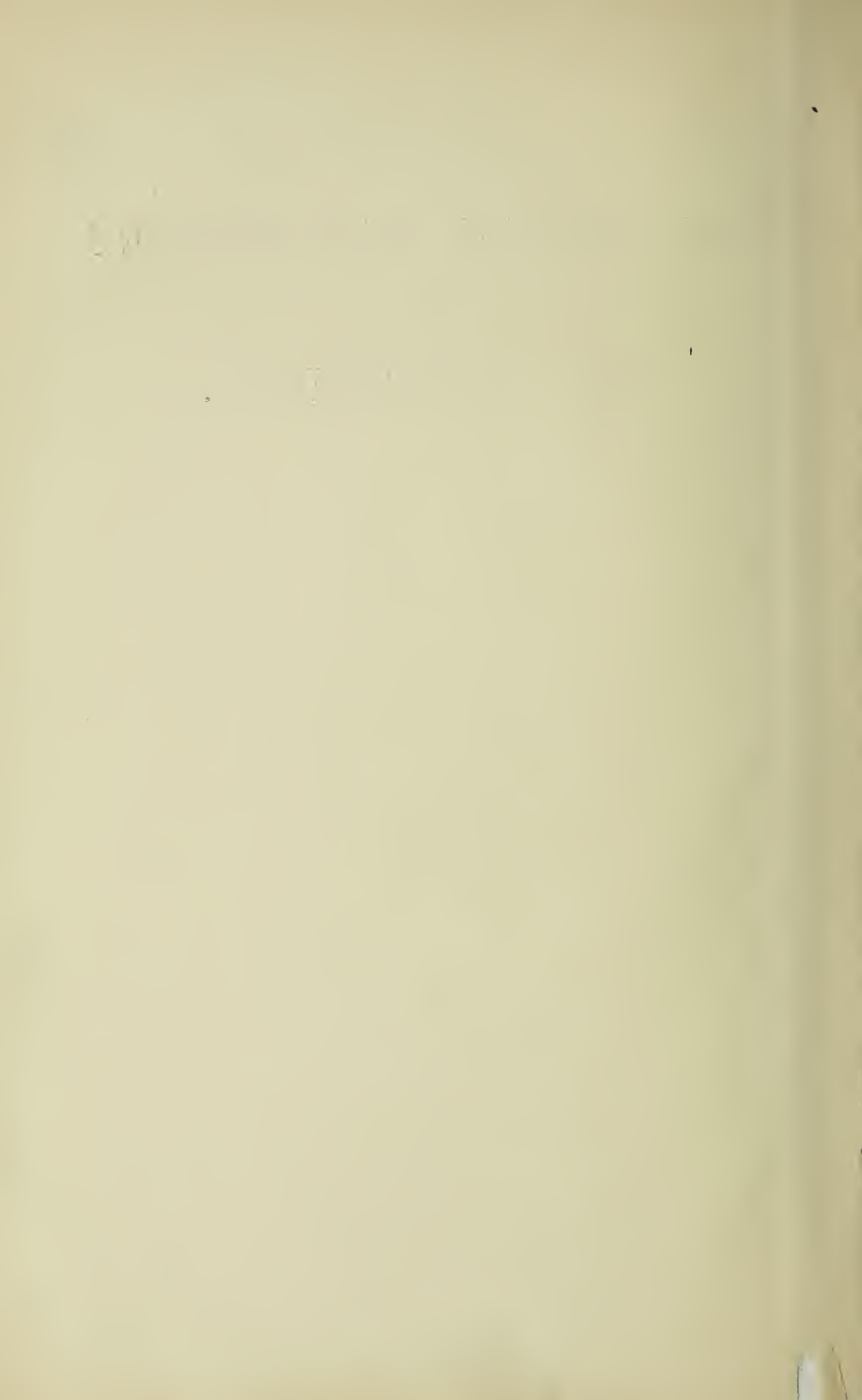
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by

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# The Government of India and the Mahomedans.

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## A RECORD OF CONFLICTING STATEMENTS.

THE details of Indian life and administration are too complex to be readily understood by anyone not familiarised therewith by residence in the country or constant study of them, and when, as in the problem of the position of the Mahomedan community in connection with the establishment of an electoral system, one proposal after another has been put forward as constituting the official solution the situation is likely to be misapprehended even by persons ordinarily well-informed on Indian affairs. They may reasonably be inclined to assume that the solution has been reached when the Viceroy of India concludes a telegraphic exposition of the latest plan of the Government of India with a declaration that, in his view, their proposals "do reasonably fulfil the pledges given to Mahomedans." Unhappily, however, the opinion of his Excellency on this matter is not borne out by a survey of those pledges, and the circumstances under which they were made. The purpose of this pamphlet is not to reargue a case for justice to

the Mahomedans, again and again set forth both here and in India, but to give a connected view of the frequent and, unhappily, conflicting, official statements on the subject, so as to make clear to every unprejudiced reader that the Indian Mahomedans have been taken to the verge of the Land of Promise but have not been given possession. The results of this failure to fulfil repeated pledges, if it is adhered to, must be injurious not only to the community immediately concerned, but also to India as a whole, as well as to British prestige in the East; and hence the present chronological record calls for the attentive consideration of the Press, of members of the Legislature, and of other public men to whom it is addressed.

### THE FIRST PLEDGE.

It is well known that the first definite pledge on which the Indian Mahomedans rely in connection with the Reforms was given by the Viceroy in reply to a representative deputation of leading Mahomedans from all parts of India, introduced by His Highness the Agha Khan, which waited on his Excellency at Simla on October 1st, 1906. A committee of the Executive Council had at that time been appointed to consider the question of an expansion of the Indian Legislatures and other reforms in the direction of giving the people a larger voice in the conduct of affairs, general, provincial and local. In the address presented to his Excellency, the deputation drew attention to the importance of adequate recognition



of the numbers and influence of the Moslem community in any such reforms. It was urged that :—

The position accorded to the Mahomedan community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and in all other ways affecting their status and influence, should be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance, and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire ; and we also hope that your Excellency will, in this connection, be pleased to give due consideration to the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago, and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds.

Detailed methods of fulfilling this principle were suggested not only in respect to the Legislatures, but also in regard to local self-governing bodies. It was suggested that the local authority—in other words the Provincial Government—should, in every case, be required to declare the number of Hindus and Mahomedans entitled to seats on municipal and district boards, such proportion to be determined in accordance with the numerical strength, social status, local influence, and special requirements of either community ; and that the elections should be separate.

His Excellency's reply contained an explicit endorsement of the principle thus laid down, and gave the utmost satisfaction to the deputation, and, when published, to the millions for whom the Agha Khan and his colleagues spoke. Lord Minto said it was manifestly impossible to go into the actual details laid before him, though these would be submitted to the Committee of his Council he had appointed to consider the question of representation.

But he could reply to the general tenour of their remarks :—

The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a municipality, a district board, or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahomedan community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies as now constituted cannot be expected to return a Mahomedan candidate, and that, if by chance they did so, it could only be at sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community, whom he would in no way represent, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire. *I am entirely in accord with you.* Please do not misunderstand me; I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced, as I believe you to be, that *any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent.* The great mass of the people of India have no knowledge of representative institutions. I agree with you, gentlemen, that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government are to be found in the municipal and district boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for the gradual political education of the people. In the meantime I can only say to you that *the Mahomedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests as a community will be safeguarded in any administrative reconstruction with which I am concerned,* and that you and the people of India may rely upon the British Raj to respect, as it has been its pride to do, the religious beliefs and the national traditions of myriads composing the population of His Majesty's Indian Empire.

### THE PLEDGE AFFIRMED.

The first official document published in connection with the Reform scheme was the circular letter to Local Governments, dated Simla, 24th

August, 1907, outlining the provisional proposals of the Governor-General in Council as a result of the labours of the Committee already mentioned. In paragraph 16 the arguments of the deputation of the previous October were quoted with approval, and "special stress" was laid on his Excellency's observations as to the mischief of a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population. It was admitted that in the past the representation of the Mahomedan community, even though supplemented by nomination had been incommensurate with the weight to which it was entitled. It was suggested that in addition to the small number of seats the Mahomedans might be able to secure in the ordinary manner, it would be desirable in each of the Councils to assign a certain number of seats to be filled exclusively by Mahomedans.

In submitting to the Secretary of State their scheme of reforms, revised in the light of constant public discussion of the draft plan, the Government of India, in the despatch of 1st October, 1908, were able to report that "all local Governments approve of the proposals for the special representation of Mahomedans which were made in our letter of 24th August, 1907." It was pointed out that in some provinces there would be difficulties in the way of a separate Mahomedan electorate, owing to want of organisation, to paucity of numbers of qualified persons, or to scattered residence. But the Government of India clearly contemplated separate

electorates as the normal and most satisfactory condition of things :—

We would deal with the question in the same way as we have proposed to deal with the representation of landholders. Our view is that in provinces where election by a regular Mahomedan electorate is feasible, that method should be adopted; that Mahomedan associations should be made use of where electorates cannot be formed; and that nomination by Government should be resorted to where neither of the first two methods are practicable. It will be for the Local Government to determine, in consultation with the leaders of the Mahomedan community, which plan should be adopted. [Para. 30.]

Thus both in the draft and the revised scheme of the Government of India there was retention of the principle of separate communal representation, and it was laid down that wherever elections were found possible they should be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahomedans. Yet in the telegram read to the House of Lords, on May 4th, Lord Minto speaks of this as impracticable, and asserts that he does not understand it to be claimed by any Mahomedans in India.

#### LORD MORLEY'S SUGGESTED PLAN.

It will be in the recollection of all interested in this question, that in his despatch of 27th November, 1908, replying to the Government of India, Lord Morley, "without rejecting the various expedients suggested by His Excellency for adoption," in order to secure the adequate representation of the Mahomedans, suggested for consideration a plan of electoral colleges, to which a fixed proportion of

Mahomedans and Hindus in the ratio of population should be returned, and which should elect to the Legislature of the province representatives for the two communities in like proportion. His Lordship remarked that among other advantages such a plan would “bring the classes specially concerned within the popular electorate, and so meet the criticism of the Hindus, to which you refer in paragraph 30”—an observation which, incidentally affords proof that the Secretary of State understood the plan of the Government of India to be one of election of “the classes specially concerned” (landowners and Mahomedans) separately from the territorial elections.

His Lordship’s suggestion for mixed electoral colleges was immediately followed by the most vigorous protests from the Mahomedans in India and their brethren entitled and expressly authorised to speak for them in this country. Emphatic resolutions on the subject were passed almost simultaneously by the conference of the All-India Moslem League at Amritsar and by the London Branch. The resolution of the latter body, whilst gratefully recognising the value of the Reform scheme as a whole, set forth that “any method which entrusts the election of Mahomedan representatives to the Viceregal and Provincial Councils to a mixed body of electors would be highly detrimental to Mahomedan interests, and that the only system which would meet the just claims and requirements of His Majesty’s Mussulman subjects is the separate election of their own representatives by Mahomedan voters.”



## THE DEPUTATION AND ITS SEQUEL.

The grounds for this view, and for the alarm and apprehension the mixed electoral college scheme excited in Moslem circles, were focussed in a representation laid before Lord Morley by a deputation of the London Branch on 27th January, headed by the President, Mr. Ameer Ali. In the course of his reply, the Secretary of State sought to reassure his hearers by pointing out that his scheme of mixed electoral colleges was not put forward as a direction to the Government of India, but was in the form of a suggestion for consideration. He said he would discuss their suggestions with the Government of India ; that a separate Mahomedan electorate was not necessarily outside the scope of the despatch, and that while he held that numerical strength should be the main factor in determining how many representatives should sit for this or the other community, modifying influences might be taken into account in allotting the number of such representatives.

These remarks were regarded as somewhat too vague and indefinite to satisfy the Mahomedans as to the fulfilment of the Viceroy's pledge, and a further pronouncement as a result of discussion between the India Office and the Governor-General in Council was anxiously awaited. It was with the utmost relief that the community—and the large body of public opinion in this country supporting their claims—read an announcement by the Secretary of State of

a decision to “meet to the full” the requirements of the Mahomedans in respect to the elections. In moving the Second Reading of the Indian Councils Bill in the House of Lords on February 23rd, the Secretary of State said :—

*The Mahomedans demand . . . . the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mahomedans vote by themselves. They have nine votes and the non-Mahomedans have three, or the other way about. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore we are not without a parallel for the idea of a separate register. Secondly, they want a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength. These two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet to the full.*

This unequivocal declaration, constituting an application in detail of the pledges given by the Viceroy some two and half years earlier, was received with much relief by the Moslem community. Their leaders regarded the battle for their rights at an end, and awaited with every confidence the measures of Government for giving effect to the two vital demands they had put forward. The London Branch of the League promptly conveyed to Lord Morley the grateful thanks of the community; and took the opportunity to remark that they construed his Lordship’s declaration “as also applicable to the elections for district, municipal and rural self-governing bodies, as these elections have invariably been included in the Mussulman appeal for adequate and distinct representation.” They asked for further details, and offered to supply any information in their possession calculated to assist in the framing of the scheme.

## OPPOSITION AND ITS RESULTS.

Although many of the Nationalist political leaders had expressed vague and indefinite sympathies with the Moslem claims, the acceptance of them by the Government was the signal for considerable anti-Moslem agitation. Meetings were got up in various centres to "protest" against the promised fulfilment of long-standing pledges. Mr. Surendranath Banerjee and fifteen other leading Nationalist politicians in Calcutta issued a manifesto, declaring the "innovations" to be dangerous, and that they would "prefer the abandonment of the entire scheme [of reform] rather than see it carried in its present shape." The subsidised organ of the Congress party here, and the Parliamentary group connected with that party, were active in pressing for what they were pleased to term the non-recognition of "creed distinctions." A hostile amendment to the second reading of the Councils Bill, tabled by Mr. C. J. O'Donnell, asked the House to declare that it could not approve of "legislation by which it is intended to establish sectarian discrimination, and to apply sectarian tests both to members of Legislative Councils and to the voters who will elect them." The falsity of the suggestions underlying these words, and of the analogies drawn in the amendment, were pointed out in a pamphlet issued by the London Branch, and evidence was cited to show that the opposition to the election of Mahomedan representatives on a separate register



had for its distinct object the subordination of the stable and loyal Mahomedan element to Hindu, or rather Brahmanical, dominancy.

In the debate on the second reading on April 1st, Mr. Buchanan, the Under-Secretary for India, declared the Secretary of State's adhesion to the "solemn promises" given the Mahomedans again and again "that they would get adequate representation to the amount and of a kind they want." From that promise, thrice repeated, "*we cannot go back, we ought not to go back, and we will not go back.*" The Prime Minister was equally emphatic, and brushed aside the sophistries underlying Mr. O'Donnell's amendment. In reply to some remarks of Lord Percy, he said (*Times* report):—

*Undoubtedly there will be a separate register for Mahomedans.* To us here, at first sight, it looks an objectionable thing, because it discriminates between people and segregates them into classes on the basis of religious creed. I do not think that is a very formidable objection. The distinction between Mahomedan and Hindu is not merely religious, but it cuts deep down into the traditions of the historic past, and is also differentiated by the habits and social customs of the community.

To these declarations no exception could be taken, but when Mr. Buchanan came to details as to the form of fulfilling the pledges his remarks, as Mr. Ameer Ali observed at a public meeting on the following day, "were not of a character to satisfy the community as constituting a complete and genuine fulfilment" (*Times* report, April 3rd). Mr. Buchanan said that the scheme of joint electoral colleges having been dropped, Mahomedan representation would be

maintained in the future in different ways in different provinces :—

In some provinces by a system of Mahomedan electorates specially constructed, in other cases by asking Mahomedan associations to name representatives, in others, at any rate for the time, by nomination. He could not give the House full particulars as to the various policies in the various provinces, but with regard to the United Provinces they had assurances from the Lieutenant-Governor that he held to the scheme proposed in the Blue-book. The substance of that was that of the four Mahomedans who were to be placed on the Legislative Council of the United Provinces two would be elected by a Mahomedan electorate, and two would be nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor. With regard to Eastern Bengal, the two Mahomedan representatives who were included in the constitution of the new Council would be put on that Council in accordance with the ideas submitted in the big Blue-book from the Governor of that province—that was to say, certain Mahomedans in Eastern Bengal would be asked to choose representatives. The only other province from which they had a definite recommendation at the present moment was Madras. They were unable to devise a scheme of a Mahomedan electorate, and they proposed, at any rate at first, to remain with two Mahomedan representatives on that Council by means of nomination.—[*Times* report, 2nd April.]

In the speech already referred to, Mr. Ameer Ali promptly and clearly stated the objections of the Mahomedan community, and the grounds for them. To again quote the *Times* report (April 3rd) he said :—

For one thing, in every authoritative announcement on behalf of the Mahomedans they had expressed opposition to any resort to the system of nomination instead of election. There was no difficulty, as they had shown, in the creation of special Mussulman electorates. (Cheers.) Unless their representatives were chosen by themselves instead of by the Government their independence would be questioned, and it would be asserted that they were only voicing the opinions of the Government by whom they had been nominated. With respect to numbers, it was absurd to give only two Mahomedan representatives to Eastern Bengal, where they formed a predominant majority of the population. In spite

of this majority in numbers, they were willing to concede that, in view of the wealth and intelligence of the Hindu community, the latter should have a majority of seats in the local Legislature. But they certainly did not contemplate that their own guaranteed representation would be so utterly inadequate as two members only. (Cheers.) Unless the numbers Mr. Buchanan mentioned were greatly augmented, the Mahomedans would not be able to exercise a substantial voice in the deliberations of the Sirkar.

### THE FIRST TELEGRAM FROM THE VICEROY.

These views were fully endorsed by the Mahomedan leaders in India when information reached them as to the tenour of Mr. Buchanan's speech. Meanwhile, there was jubilation in the opposite camp. Mr. O'Donnell refrained from moving his amendment, and the Congress organ, *India*, devoted a leader to showing that Lord Morley's pledges were not to be fulfilled; that "wiser counsels had prevailed," and that though the scheme was still open to objection, the ship had at least been taken into mid-channel. The pressure of advanced Hindu political leaders upon the Indian authorities, now that it was seen that the pledges were not to be fully regarded, was redoubled, and the effect of such pressure was seen when the Committee stage of the Bill was taken on April 19th. The Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. Hobhouse (representing the India Office in the absence, through illness, of Mr. Buchanan) was asked by Earl Percy to reconcile the statements made on the second reading with Lord Morley's promise that Mahomedan representation should be not merely sufficient, but something in excess of their

actual numerical position. Mr. Hobhouse said that the Secretary of State adhered to that declaration "in all its fulness and completeness," but added that the difficulty had been how to provide such representation without unnecessarily increasing the numbers of Legislative Councillors. Communications with the Government of India on this "difficult and complicated problem" had been passing, and, telegraphing on April 12th, the Viceroy said :—

The method proposed is simply that in general electorates, such as municipalities, district boards, and provincial Councils, all sects and classes, including Mahomedans, will vote together. By this means some, but not sufficient, representation will be obtained for Mahomedans. In addition, a certain number of seats will be reserved for Mahomedans, and no one but Mahomedans will have a voice in filling them. They may be filled in many ways—by election pure and simple, by election by associations, by electoral colleges, or by nomination, as the circumstances of each province require. The methods will vary in different provinces, and will be subject to alterations from time to time as experience may dictate.

The Earl of Ronaldshay at once pointed out that elections conducted as suggested would not constitute a fulfilment of the promises given the Mahomedans, and that it was absurd to suppose that under the system proposed in the telegram they would be able to gain their fair share of representation on the Legislative and other councils. The news of this telegram was received by the Mahomedans in India almost with incredulity, for they could not believe that there would be so great a lapse between the promises of Government and their performance. But incredulity gave place to dismay and bitter disappointment ; meetings were held in all parts of the country,

and strongly-worded resolutions of protest were recorded by various branches of the All-India Moslem League, some of them being telegraphed to this country and published in the newspapers. It is not too much to say that the Moslems felt that they had been betrayed by the Government, and that they were, after all, to be subjected to the dominance of the Hindu majority, and consequently to be a negligible quantity in the shaping of legislation and the influencing of executive action. The overwhelming evidence of this state of feeling could not be passed over by the authorities, and once more the Government of India pledged its word.

#### REMOVING OBSTACLES FROM THE PATH.

When the Councils Bill came up in the Commons on report, on April 26th, Lord Ronaldshay brought matters to an issue by moving an amendment providing that the ratio of Mussulman and Hindu representation on all representative bodies should be fixed by executive authority, and that in every case in which any seat on a representative body thus assigned to the Mahomedan community was to be filled by election, the necessary electorate should be composed exclusively of Mahomedans. Lord Ronaldshay drew attention to published telegrams from important Moslem leaders in India, and said that they showed that the Mahomedans throughout India were suffering from a sense of grievous wrong and injustice. He truly remarked that if the Government followed a



course calculated to shake the faith of this great community in their undeviating justice and the inviolability of their word, they would go far to undermine the whole fabric of British rule in Asia. Thereupon, Mr. Hobhouse declared that there had been a misunderstanding of the telegram of April 12th, and that the pledges given were to be adhered to. He went on to say :—

Looking to the size of India and the different customs, traditions, and habits of the various peoples, it was not surprising that the local authorities found in the course of their inquiries that it would be impossible to apply a uniform system under which the principle could be carried out. The noble lord thought that he had detected some divergence between the views expressed by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State and those expressed in the telegram from the Government of India. If there was a divergence—and he did not admit it—it was due to the difficulties experienced by the Government of India in making the inquiries to which he had referred. That telegram did not necessarily close the discussion. It did not mean that they had done more than propose to the Secretary of State certain things. It did not follow that the difficulties experienced by the Government of India were either permanent or fundamental. Every endeavour would be made by the Government of India and by the Government at home to remove any obstacle which might be found to lie in their path in carrying out the pledges which had been given to the House. It was quite impossible, looking at the different conditions which were found in every province, to set up rules for elections which should be uniform and identical. , . . *Wherever elections were found to be possible they would be conducted on the basis of separate representation for the Mahomedan community.*—[*Times* report, April 27th.]

While personally favouring the inclusion in the Bill of some such express provision for separate Moslem representation as the amendment proposed, Mr. Balfour suggested the withdrawal of the motion, in view of the satisfactory undertaking with which Mr. Hobhouse had concluded his speech. The

amendment was accordingly withdrawn, and the Bill passed from the effective control of the House of Commons on the express understanding that “wherever elections were found to be possible they would be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahomedan community.”

### YET ANOTHER WITHDRAWAL.

After the Commons’ amendments had been considered in the House of Lords on May 4th, Lord Curzon asked the Secretary of State to amplify the information previously given as to the Mahomedan position and to make it clear that in no respect was there cause to fear that the pledges which had been given did not still hold good. In reply Lord Morley read the text of a private telegram he had received from the Viceroy on the previous day, to the following effect :—

Hobhouse’s speech has been interpreted as meaning that major portion of representation accorded to Mahomedans is to be given through the mixed electorates, such as district boards and municipalities, on which they will vote conjointly with other classes, and that the special electorates in which Mahomedans will vote separately are only intended to supplement general elections, and will carry only a small number of seats. I need hardly say that this is not at all what we contemplated. Our intention was that Mahomedans should have, by means of separate electorates, a number of seats closely approaching that to which their numerical proportion in the population would entitle them, and that over and above this they would obtain some seats in mixed electorates such as district boards and municipalities, Universities, Presidency corporations, and as landholders. In Bombay, for example, under the scheme detailed in my telegram of February 8, four seats are specially assigned to Mahomedans, and in addition to these, two Mahomedans will

be elected by landholders and district bodies of Sind, so that they will secure a certain *minimum* of 6, or 28 per cent., their ratio to the general population being only 20. In the United Provinces, where they number only 14 per cent., they will have four special seats, or nearly 20 per cent. of the seats assigned for election. Of course, the same ratio cannot be applied in all provinces, and allowance must be made for the *status*, character, and educational attainments of Mahomedan population in each case. There has also been misapprehension of our views regarding nomination, which are intended to be merely a temporary expedient to be resorted to until the community should be ripe for election. I do not understand any Mahomedan here to claim concession suggested—namely, that wherever elections are found possible they should be conducted on basis of separate representation of the Mahomedan community. If interpreted literally, that would involve having separate Mahomedan electorates within the various electorates proposed, such as Presidency corporations, district boards, and municipalities, Universities, landholders, and the commercial community. This is manifestly impracticable. It could only be effected by recasting the entire scheme and increasing *maximum* strength of all councils as fixed by Bill. On the whole case, my view is that present proposals as now explained do reasonably fulfil pledges given to Mahomedans.

A *communiqué* of similar purport was issued to the Press of India.

Thus, at the moment when the Indian Councils Bill passed from the control of Parliament, there were made public proposals constituting further variation, as the Moslem League contends, from repeated assurances of separate representation in all stages and in excess of numerical proportion. How his Excellency can have regarded this latest scheme as “reasonably fulfilling the pledges given the Mahomedans” it is difficult to see. It is clear on the face of the telegram that the Viceroy has been misinformed. His statement that he does not understand any Mahomedans in India to have



claimed concession of separate representation wherever elections are found possible is at variance with constant and emphatic declarations made by the Leagues and leading members of the community in India, including representations and telegrams addressed to the Indian authorities, and some of which have been officially published (*vide* the Reform Blue Books, Vol. 11). The Mahomedans are well aware that the principle referred to would involve having separate Mahomedan electorates "within the various electorates proposed," and this is what they have understood was promised them throughout. His Excellency declares such a method to be impracticable, and says it could only be effected by recasting the entire scheme and increasing the maximum strength on all Councils as fixed by the Bill. In the annexure to the representation submitted to the Secretary of State by the deputation of January 27th a scheme of representation was outlined; the London Branch submits that this was entirely practicable, and certainly would not involve the recasting of the Reform scheme as a whole, nor the increase of the maximum strength of the Councils. Such increase would indeed be deprecated by the community as affecting its ratio of representation and thus tending to take away with one hand what had been given them by the other.

#### THE ALLEGED CONCURRENCE OF MOSLEMS.

By way of supporting the method of meeting Moslem claims outlined in the telegram published on

May 4th, a number of communications appeared in Anglo-Indian and Home journals asserting that "the Government of India have not wavered in their original plan, which holds the field" and that "the mischievous suggestion of electoral colleges in Lord Morley's despatch caused such trouble as has arisen" (Simla correspondent of *The Times*, May 4). The *Times of India*, of April 23, published a telegram from its Simla correspondent stating that the scheme Mr. Hobhouse outlined in the House of Commons on April 19th, was identical with the proposal of the Government of India given in the despatch of October 1st—

The sequence of events in this connection is that the Government of India proposed this arrangement in Mahomedan interests and that the Secretary of State put forward a modification of it, which was unfavourably received by the Mahomedans, and that in deference to Mahomedan representations the original arrangement has now been reverted to.

With reference to these statements it should be noted that the London Moslem League in the representation submitted to Lord Morley on the 25th January, which expressed the general *consensus* of Mohamedan opinion, distinctly pronounced against the arrangements proposed by the Government of India. The statement that in deference to Mahomedan representations the original arrangement has now been reverted to proceeds upon a complete misapprehension of the Mussulman attitude.

In order, however, to impress upon the British public the mistaken view of the case above referred to, a further extract from Lord Minto's telegram of May 2nd

has been published as a White Paper (May 10). It cites an isolated passage from a letter addressed to the Viceroy on behalf of a special sub-committee of the All-India Moslem League (Aligarh), dated the 4th of February. This letter (published in full in the newspapers at the time) deals with a variety of subjects; it welcomes the "Reforms," expresses relief at Lord Morley's declarations to the Moslem deputation of the 27th January with regard "to class representation as it affects the Mahomedans of India," states that his Lordship's "pronouncement with respect to exclusive Mussulman electoral colleges had been read by Mahomedans with much thankfulness," and reiterates with much emphasis the Mahomedan objections to mixed electorates, as members returned by those bodies "would only be mandatories and nominees of a non-Moslem majority." It suggests that "the denominational element should be carried down to the very base," but waives it in the last stage, viz., the case of the members returned to the Councils (this position was afterwards abandoned); and submits that "whereas the effective class representation of Mahomedans is impossible, without giving them separate electorates from beginning to end," the last suggestion would avoid the possibility of political isolation between them and their non-Moslem fellow-countrymen. It then goes on to add "that if the full due of the Mahomedans as to number of seats in the Councils can be secured to them by means of separate and denominational electorates, of which the Mahomedan section of the rural and municipal

boards may form parts, the Mahomedans have no desire to court the resentment of their non-Moslem countrymen to vote again on the same boards for the purposes of returning members to the Councils." The passage which has been furnished to the Viceroy for defeating the Mahomedan claims and upsetting the solemn pledges to them is merely incidental. It refers to the proposals made by the Government of India in the despatch of October 1st ; and states that the arrangements were in keeping with the maintenance of "the principle of effective Mahomedan representation"; that the community was under a heavy debt of gratitude to his Excellency for the despatch ; and that unless the reform scheme was carried on the "principles" laid down in that document, its "grateful acceptance by the Mahomedans or any other minority, great or small" could not be foretold. The telegram of the Viceroy added :—

These views were shared by the Deccan Moslem League, Bombay, and the Madras Presidency Moslem League also intimated general approval. In fact the Government of India have received no representations from Mahomedans taking exception to any essential feature of proposals made in their despatch.

With regard to the attitude of these two Leagues there is evidently a grave misapprehension, for on the 12th of February the Deccan League, and on the 14th March, and again so recently as the 27th April (barely a fortnight before the Viceroy's telegram), the Madras League emphatically and unequivocally condemned mixed electorates. (See Appendix.)

The most extraordinary feature in this eventful episode of British rule in India is the fact that resolutions adopted in Mussulman meetings, though telegraphed to the Viceroy, do not appear to reach him.

#### THE ISOLATED QUOTATION.

In considering, the bearing of the telegraphed extract from a letter submitted to the Government of India more than three months ago it is important to remember the sequence of events. The great and overwhelming anxiety of the Moslem community at that time was to obtain a reversal of Lord Morley's plan of mixed electoral colleges. Lord Morley had received the deputation of the London Branch a few days before; but the full text of his speech had not reached India, and all that was in possession of the public there was a meagre and not very clear summary of his Lordship's remarks. Those remarks left it still an open question whether *mixed* electoral colleges would not be adopted; and in the circumstances the League in India was apparently advised to press for adhesion to the *principles* of the despatch of October 1st. The Government of India had, in fact, reaffirmed the principles to which Lord Minto originally gave adhesion in October, 1906, and the Secretary of State's plan would have constituted a departure from them. In pressing for adherence to those principles the Moslem League certainly did not commit itself to an acceptance of all details of the despatch of October 1st.



The extensions and additions made in the general plan of the Government of India by the Secretary of State—extensions giving the Councils fuller powers, greatly increasing their maximum strength, dispensing with official majorities in the provincial Legislatures, and in many other ways adding to the vital necessity for safeguarding the rights of minorities—profoundly affected the details of application and the general structure of the Reforms.

The situation was further changed when on February 23rd (nearly three weeks after the letter quoted by the Viceroy had been submitted by the special sub-Committee of the League) Lord Morley accepted “the Mahomedan demand”—voiced as insistently in India as in this country—for “election of their own representatives to these councils in all stages,” and “a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength.” These pledges, combined with the drastic changes in the general framework of Reforms, made obsolete in no small measure the detailed proposals of the despatch of October 1st. To these the Government of India may be wedded; but it is not fair or just, on the strength of an isolated passage of a letter written long before Lord Morley’s pledges were made, and in the face of the overwhelming Mahomedan opinion which has so strongly and insistently expressed itself all over the country, to claim that they have the entire acquiescence of the Indian Mahomedans. The appendices show that, whether here or in India, the Mohamedans will be satisfied *with nothing else* than a full and generous

discharge of the pledges given first by Lord Minto then by Lord Morley, and repeated time after time on their behalf in the House of Commons. Not only so, it can be shown that the scheme set forth in the Viceroy's telegram does not correspond in every detail with the plan of October 1st, as the Government of India supposes. But into this aspect of the question it is not necessary now to enter.

#### SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL DECLARATIONS.

It has been deemed desirable to trace in some detail the varying and conflicting official declarations whereby the Mahomedans of India, have been alternately gratified and disappointed, relieved and perplexed, and mollified and dismayed, and to show the justification that exists for the terms of the resolutions of the London Branch, dated May 6 and 13, given in the Appendices. It only remains in conclusion to present a bird's-eye view of the many widenings of the path along which the Mohamedans have been led to the mirage of varying systems of representation only partially meeting their needs. They feel that the pledges given to them have been set aside, and that their interests have been subordinated to the clamour of a hostile agitation ; and they ask for justice even now at the eleventh hour.

Here is the extraordinary record :—

1906.

- Oct. 1. The Viceroy expresses to a representative Moslem deputation his hearty concurrence in the view that in any system of representation whether to a municipality, a district board or a legislature the Mahomedans should be represented as a community, and says that their interests shall be safeguarded in any administrative reconstruction in which he is concerned.

1907.

- Aug. 24. In adumbrating a draft scheme of Reforms the Government of India quote and reaffirm this pledge.

1908.

- Oct. 1. In submitting a revised plan to the Secretary of State the Government of India intimate that all the Local Governments approve of their proposals for the special representation of Mahomedans, and they propose separate Mahomedan electorates as the normal and desirable method.
- Nov. 27. Lord Morley suggests to the Government of India, in substitution of their proposal, a plan of mixed electoral colleges on a strictly numerical basis.
- Dec. 17. The two despatches aforementioned are published, and immediately the Mahomedan community protests against the mixed electoral colleges as failing to fulfil the pledges of the Viceroy



1909.

- Jan. 27. Lord Morley receives a Moslem deputation and promises consideration of their claims as to separate electorates and representation in excess of strict numerical proportion. The deputation suggests exclusively Mahomedan electoral college. The Secretary of State accepts the idea.
- Feb. 23. Lord Morley informs the House of Lords that these two demands he is ready and intends to meet in full. Hostile agitation on the part of Hindu politicians and their helpers in this country ensues.
- April 1. The Prime Minister and the Under Secretary of State for India assure the House of Commons that there will be no going back on the pledges given the Mahomedans. But the Under Secretary, in stating details, speaks of the representation being carried out in different ways in different provinces, and of a numerical minimum in certain provinces so small that it is held by the Mahomedan leaders to fail to constitute a complete and genuine fulfilment of the pledges.
- April 19. The Secretary to the Treasury, in the absence of Mr. Buchanan, reads to the House of Commons a telegram from the Viceroy stating that "in general electorates . . . all sects and classes, including Mahomedans, will vote together," and that

in addition a certain number of seats would be reserved for Mahomedans. This announcement, indicating, as was supposed, abandonment of separate Moslem electorates as the normal state of things, causes bitter disappointment.

April 26. Mr. Hobhouse tells the House of Commons that the telegram had been misunderstood, and promises "that every endeavour will be made by the Government of India and by the Government at home to remove any sort or kind of obstacle which may be found to lie within our power to the carrying out of the pledges which have been given before this House," and that "wherever elections are found to be possible they will be conducted on the basis of separate representation for the Mahomedan community."

May 4. Lord Morley, asked by Lord Curzon for further information, just after the House of Lords had accepted the Commons' amendments to the Councils Bill, and the measure was no longer under the effective control of Parliament, produces a telegram from the Viceroy alleging that the Mahomedans in India had not asked for separate electorates wherever found possible; that this would be impracticable and involve the recasting of the entire scheme of reforms; and that a scheme

partly of special and partly of mixed electorates would “reasonably fulfil the pledges given.”

May- 10. The Secretary of State presents to Parliament a further extract from the Viceroy’s telegram, citing an isolated passage in a detailed representation made by a Special Sub-Committee of the All-India Moslem League, with the object apparently of suggesting that the plan outlined in the original part of the telegram has the approval of the Indian Mahomedans. As the special object of the letter in question was to press for abandonment of the plan of *mixed* electoral colleges, and as Lord Morley had not then given his specific pledges on the subject, the letter does not afford the evidence suggested. The appendices show that the demands of the Moslem community have been insistent, consistent and clear.

On behalf of the Committee,

S. ZAHUR AHMÂD,

*Hon. Secretary, All-India Moslem League,  
London Branch.*

42, QUEEN ANNE’S CHAMBERS,  
WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.  
28th May, 1909.



## APPENDIX I.

**The Annual Conference of THE ALL-INDIA  
MOSLEM LEAGUE,  
at Amritsur, 31st December, 1908.**

2.—That the All-India Moslem League regrets that the Secretary of State for India has not explicitly confirmed in his Despatch on the scheme of reform of Councils just pronounced, his Excellency the Viceroy's reply to the address presented by a deputation of Mussulmans in October, 1906, that in consideration of the value of the contribution which Mussulmans make to the defence of the Empire and in view of the position which they occupied in India until recently, his Excellency was in entire accord with the members of the deputation who, in His Excellency's opinion, justified the claim that the position of Mussulmans should be estimated not merely on their numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of their community and the service it has rendered to the Empire, and this League trusts that the important pronouncement will speedily be confirmed by the Secretary of State, and given practical recognition in fixing the proportion of seats in Councils to be filled in by purely Mahomedan electorates.

3.—That whereas the language of paragraph 12 of the despatch of the Secretary of State dealing with the scheme of reform of councils is such as has possibly created in the mind of some of the loyal Indian Mahomedans the incorrect impression that the paragraph in question suggests the grant of separate and denominational representation to Mahomedans of India, and whereas the All-India Moslem League regards such impression to be solely due to the optimism that proceeds from the unqualified trust that Indian Mahomedans have traditionally reposed in the justice and impartiality of the British Government, the All-India Moslem League deems it to be its duty to deplore the vagueness

of the language of that paragraph and most regretfully concludes it to mean that the scheme of representation of minorities contained in the said paragraph does not and cannot secure the protection which is intended to be given to such communities as the creation of non-denominational electorates, whether original or intermediary, precludes the possibility of the successful election of real representatives of minorities, and that the mere reservation of a certain number of seats on imperial and provincial councils in favour of such communities, without any system of denominational representation from the first voting units to the representatives in council chambers, will end in the return of such members of minorities as are only mandatories of majorities, and that under the circumstances the All-India Moslem League views the suggestions in paragraph 12 of the said despatch with great alarm, and has grave apprehension that in their present form they are sure to create dire disappointment in the Mahomedan community, and that unless materially altered to suit their requirements, the essentials of which are representation on a purely denominational basis, they will mark the first breakdown of that implicit faith which Mussulmans have so long placed in the care and solicitude of the Government whose just pride and profession have been to hold the scales even.

## THE DECCAN MOSLEM LEAGUE.

(Reproduced from the *Times of India*, 13th February, 1909.)

The League cordially endorses the prayer put before the Secretary of State by Mr. Ameer Ali, as well as the representation of the All-India Moslem League sent to the Viceroy by Mr. Ali Imam. In the opinion of the league, it is absolutely essential that the denominational element must be carried down to the very base, the first voting unit as well as the electoral colleges. It is also essential that the representatives of the Mahomedans in the Councils, Provincial and Imperial, must be Mahomedans. In this matter the Deccan League endorses the view put before Lord Morley by Mr. Ameer Ali,

## MADRAS PRESIDENCY MOSLEM LEAGUE, 14th March, 1909.

1.—The Madras Presidency Moslem League tenders its grateful thanks to Lord Morley for his assurance that the demands of Mahomedans to elect their own representatives at all stages,

and for a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength, will be met in full, and trusts that the number of seats to be allotted to the Mahomedans will be commensurate with their political importance.

2.—The Madras Presidency Moslem League is of opinion that Indians are sufficiently advanced to deserve the confidence of the Government, and be associated in executive administration of the country, and urges their appointment to the Viceroy's Executive Council. It also suggests the extension of the Council to admit of the appointment of a Hindu and a Mahomedan. The appointment of a Mahomedan will not only give immense satisfaction to the 60 millions of Mussulmans, and strengthen their loyalty, but will also impress other Mahomedan Powers with the fairness and liberality of the largest Mahomedan Government.

3.—The Madras Presidency Moslem League views with great concern the attitude of the Hindu Press and Associations against Lord Morley's recognition of the Mahomedan claims. Such an opposition to the just and reasonable demands of the Mahomedans only tends to bring about a rupture between the Hindus and the Mahomedans, instead of creating the good fellow-feeling which ought to subsist between the two communities and which it is the object of the Moslem League to promote. This affords another instance of the necessity of special safeguards for the protection of Mussulman interests.

4.—In the opinion of the Madras Presidency Moslem League the grant of separate electorates to the Mahomedans will foster good feeling between Hindus and Mahomedans by removing all causes of friction, disappointment and heart-burning which all unequal contest in the electioneering campaigns is sure to engender, and which will no doubt accentuate the racial differences between the two communities, and retard their common progress.

## ALLAHABAD, 28th March, 1909.

Resolutions adopted at a Mass Meeting of Mahomedans, presided over by Moulana Moulvi Vilayet Hossain. The first Resolution was moved by Mr. Abdul Majed, Barrister-at-law :—

1.—The Mussulmans of Allahabad assembled in meeting beg to offer their grateful thanks to Lord Morley and Lord Minto for the assurance that the demand of the Mahomedans to elect their own representatives at all stages and for a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength will be met in full, and trust



that, in view of their political and historical importance, the number of seats allotted to the Mahomedans will be equal to those given to the Hindus and will be filled by election. They have no doubt that the recognition of the just claims of Mussulmans will strengthen their loyalty.

2.—The Mahomedans of Allahabad look with much concern on the agitation of their Hindu countrymen to thwart the just claims of Mussulmans, and hope that the agitation, based as it is on the selfish ground of making the representation of Mussulmans dependent on the goodwill of the majority, will not shake the resolve of Lord Morley and Lord Minto to grant separate electorates and do justice to the seventy million Mussulmans of India, whose position has no analogy to that of the other communities of India, and who, unlike the other peoples in India, are bound together by common ideals and traditions of race and religion.

3.—The Mussulmans of Allahabad beg to point out most emphatically that the difference between Mussulmans and Hindus is no mere difference of articles of religious faith but a difference between life, traditions, history, and all social things; and in view of the state of feeling existing between both parties, nothing short of separate representation at all stages can secure the interests of Mussulmans. Separate electorates will, in the opinion of the Mussulmans of Allahabad, tend to foster good feeling between Hindus and Mussulmans by removing all causes of friction, disappointment and heart-burning which an equal contest in electioneering campaigns will be sure to produce, and which will no doubt accentuate social differences between the two communities and retard their common progress. Any attempt to overlook the present conditions, and to resort to premature and artificial methods of unification, such as mixed electorates, will lead to further mutual distrust and disruption.

4.—The Mussulmans of Allahabad beg to express their disappointment at the rejection by the House of Lords of clause 3 of the Indian Councils Bill regarding the formation of Provincial Executive Councils, and beg that it may be re-inserted.

5.—The Mussulmans of Allahabad are thankful to Lord Morley for the recognition of the principle of appointing Indians to the Viceregal Executive Council, but they consider the appointment of a member from one community only will seriously prejudice the rights and interests of the other.

6.—A copy of the proceeding may be sent to the Press, and an abstract of the Resolutions may be sent by cable to Lord Morley and by telegram to Lord Minto.



## RAE BAREILI, 17th April, 1909.

At a meeting of Mahomedans at Rae Bareili on the subject of the India Councils Bill, it was urged that the number of Mahomedan seats should not be determined by numerical strength, but that due regard should be paid to the past and present political importance, social position, steadfast loyalty and substantial interests of the Mahomedans in the country. Telegrams to this effect were sent to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. A similar meeting was held at Fyzabad.

Extreme bitterness of feeling exists among the Mahomedans in these provinces on account of the opposition displayed by the Hindus to Mahomedan claims under the reform scheme.

## DECCAN MOSLEM LEAGUE MEETING, at Poona, 17th April, 1909.

1.—That the Conference endorses the prayer of the Mahomedan deputation to Lord Morley for the Representation of Mahomedans by Mahomedans elected by Mahomedan electorates at all stages of the elective systems.

2.—That this Conference is of the opinion that if Mahomedans be obliged to participate in general mixed elections it should only be for the purpose of supplementing their election in respect of a portion of their claims based upon grounds of political importance. This Conference strongly disapproves of nominations and mixed general elections.

## DACCA, 18th April, 1909.

Resolutions adopted at a Mass Meeting of Mahomedans, presided over by the Honorable The Nawab Bahadur, Khaja Sir Selimoollah, K.C.S.I. :—

1.—That in the opinion of this Meeting no scheme of reform will be acceptable to the Mahomedans which does not provide for separate election by them of their own representatives.

2.—That this meeting views with alarm the proposal that Mahomedan Members should be appointed by nomination only.

and considers such a step as retrograde and highly detrimental to the interests of the community.

3.—That in the opinion of this meeting the announcement made by Lord Morley that he accepted the demands of the Mahomedans, both as regards the separate electoral colleges and as regards the adequate representation of their interests in proportion to their political importance, establishes the just and legitimate nature of their claims, and any modification thereof will cause the greatest disappointment and irritation among them.

### SHERPUR, 18th April, 1909.

A grand meeting of the Anjuman-i-Mufidul Islam, Sherpur, was held on Sunday, 18th April, in Mymensingh, to consider the India Councils Bill.

1.—That in the opinion of this meeting no scheme of reform will be acceptable to the Mahomedans which does not confer on them a privilege for separate election by them of their own representatives.

2.—That this meeting is greatly apprehensive of the proposal to appoint Mahomedan members only by nomination and considers such a measure as retrograde and highly detrimental to the interests of the community.

3.—That in the opinion of this meeting the announcement made by Lord Morley that he had met in full the demands of the Mahomedans, both as regards separate electoral colleges and as regards the adequate representation of their interests in proportion to their political importance, is only a recognition of their legitimate claims, and any modification therefore will cause the greatest disappointment and irritation among them.

4.—That copies of the proceedings of this meeting be sent to the Viceroy and the Calcutta newspapers, and that Moulvi Ainuddin Ahmed, Joint Secretary, Anjuman-i-Mufidul Islam, be authorised to communicate the same.

### NOAKHALI, 18th April, 1909.

At a meeting of the Noakhali Islamia Association, held on the 18th April, resolutions identical with those passed by the

Mahomedan Association of Sherpore, Mymensingh, on the subject of the India Councils Bill, were unanimously passed. Meetings were also held in Feni, Netrokona and Brahmanberia.

### MYMENSINGH, 18th April, 1909.

A public meeting of the Mahommedans of Mymensingh Town was held at the Town Hall on the 18th April, to discuss the Reform Scheme of Lord Morley. The following resolutions were unanimously adopted. Similar resolutions were also passed by the sub-Divisional Branch Associations of the Anjuman :—

1.—That this meeting expresses its sincere and cordial thanks to Lords Morley and Minto for their having felt the grievance of the Mahomedan community, and devised remedy for the same by incorporating into the Reform Bill the rights of the Mahomedans of India for separate election of members from their own community to Legislative Councils of the Supreme and Local Government, and having fixed the number of Mahomedan representatives in such Councils according to their historical significance and political importance.

2.—That this meeting records its deep obligation and sincere thanks to Mr. Ameer Ali, for his steadfast devotion to the cause of the Mahomedan community, whereof he is one of the foremost leaders.

3.—That this meeting is of opinion that no scheme of reform will be acceptable to Mahomedans of India which does not provide for a separate election of their own representatives by their own community.

4.—That this meeting views with alarm and grave anxiety, the proposal to equalize the Mahomedan representation by nomination, and consider such a step as extremely retrograde and highly detrimental to the interests of the community.

5.—That, in the opinion of this meeting, the declaration by the Secretary of State that the demands of the Mahomedan community, in India, both as regards their separate election and adequate representation of their interests on the basis of their political importance, is only the recognition of their just and rightful claim,

and any modification thereof will operate as the cause of the greatest disappointment and irritation amongst them.

6.—That this meeting earnestly desires to impress upon the Government the necessity of a Mahomedan member in the Viceroy's Executive Council, either simultaneously with a member of any other community in India, at least alternately with a member of the non-Moslem community.

## RANGOON MOSLEM ASSOCIATION, 19th April, 1909.

At an Extraordinary General Meeting of the members of the Rangoon Moslem Association last evening, a Resolution was passed expressing gratitude to Lord Morley for separate representation allowed to Mussulmans, and copies are to be sent to Lord Morley and Lord Minto through the local Government. In the next Resolution, members expressed sorrow at the hostile action of the Hindus, protesting against the above representation, at the Meeting held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, and appreciating the public spirit of Mussulmans in leaving the meeting. Another Resolution, which was to be sent direct to Lord Morley, expressed sorrow at the unsatisfactory reply received from Lord Morley in regard to the request of the deputation of the All-India Moslem League, London Branch, to appoint one Hindu and one Mussulman on the Viceroy's executive Council, and requested Lord Morley to nominate a Mussulman.

## FENI, 23rd April, 1909.

Resolutions passed at a large representative meeting of the Anjumani-i-Islamia of Feni, on the 20th inst. :—

1.—That in the opinion of this meeting no scheme of reform will be acceptable to the Mahomedans which does not provide for separate election by them of their own representative.

2.—That this meeting views with alarm the proposal to appoint Mahomedan members by nomination, and considers such a step as retrograde and highly detrimental to the interests of the community.

3.—That in the opinion of this meeting the announcement made by Lord Morley that he had met in full the demands of the Mahomedans, both as regards the separate electoral colleges and as regards adequate representation of their interest in proportion to their political importance, is only a recognition of their legitimate claims, and any modification thereof will cause the greatest disappointment and irritation among them.

### MORSHEDABAD, 23rd April, 1909.

At a large and influential meeting in Morsheadabad of the Anjumani - i - Mussalman - i - Bengala (Association of the Mahomedans of Bengal), of which the Honorable Nawab Bahadur of Morshedabad is patron, held on the 23rd of April, under the Presidency of Nawab Jehandar Mirza, the following Resolutions were adopted :—

1.—That in the opinion of the Anjuman no scheme of reform will be acceptable to Mahomedans which does not provide for separate election by them of their own representatives, and does not give them in view of their political and historical importance, an adequate number of seats in addition to those due to them for their numerical strength.

2.—That while gratefully thanking the Government and rejoicing at the generous policy of taking the Indian community in its confidence, as shown by the appointment of an Indian as the Law Member, the Anjuman at the same time views with regret the non-appointment of a Mahomedan also to the Viceregal Executive Council, and earnestly prays for the appointment of a Mahomedan member to the said Council.

### MADRAS, 24th April, 1909.

Resolutions passed at a meeting of the Madras Moslem League, presided over by the Prince of Arcot, K.C.I.E. :—

1.—The Madras Presidency Moslem League most emphatically protests against the proposed nomination of Mussulman members



to the Local Legislative Council and trusts that the Government will adhere to the principle of separate election in the case of Mussulmans, as the difficulties in its way are not great and insurmountable when compared to the advantages of popular election.

2.—The League is strongly of opinion that Mussulmans of all the major provinces should always be represented in the Imperial Legislative Council, and urges that the Mussulmans of this Presidency should be allowed to have representatives of their own permanently, instead of alternately with Bombay.

3.—This League views with great apprehension the recent Ministerial statements in the House of Commons maintaining mixed electorates and giving Mussulmans a voice in filling only supplementary seats, and strongly insists upon the fulfilment of Lord Morley's pledges to the All-India Moslem League. The League trusts that Mussulmans will be allowed to fill all the seats to which they are entitled, both on grounds of numerical strength and political importance, through special electorates in all provinces.

## THE PUNJAB PROVINCIAL MOSLEM LEAGUE, 24th April, 1909.

At a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Punjab Provincial Moslem League, held at Lahore, on Saturday, the 24th instant, the following resolution was moved by Khan Bahadur Mian Mahomed Shafi, General Secretary, seconded by Mian Ihsan-ul-Haq, Barrister-at-Law (Jullundar), and supported by S. Abdul Aziz, editor of *The Observer*, and Maulvi Mahbub Alam, editor of *The Paisa Akhbar*, and was unanimously adopted :—

The Provincial Moslem League, Punjab, reaffirms its previous resolutions to the effect that the Mahomedans are, in view of their number and importance, entitled to adequate and separate representation in connection with the projected scheme of Indian Reforms. The League has read with grave concern the statement recently made by Mr. Hobhouse in the House of Commons that



the method of representation proposed by Government is that all seats and classes should vote together and that the admitted insufficiency of Mahomedan representation thus resulting would be attempted to be met by assignment of some additional seats to the community. The statement is clearly contrary to the pledges given by Lord Morley to the Mahomedan deputation and repeated by him in the House of Lords and the League respectfully, yet emphatically protests against any departure from those pledges, the breach of which is calculated to cause great disappointment among the Indian Mussulmans. Separate representation at all stages is, in the opinion of the League, the only effective method of safeguarding Mahomedan interests on the proposed councils.

### **HARDOI, Thursday, 25th April, 1909.**

1.—That this meeting emphatically protests against the method of representation of the Mahomedans lately proposed by the Government of India, and insists on a separate Mahomedan register from top to bottom, and it views with distrust the action of Government in going back from the promise which the Secretary of State made only a short time ago to concede the Mahomedan demands for a separate electorate in full and considers that the proposed modification will give rise to serious discontent among the Mahomedans.

2.—That this meeting regards with much concern the agitation of non-Mahomedans against the just claims of Mahomedans for a separate electorate, and hopes that this measure will minimise the differences between Mahomedans and other communities, and return true representatives of Mahomedans.

3.—That this meeting strongly opposes nomination, and prefers representation by election, as the Mahomedans look with disaffection and disappointment on the former course.

### **MIRZAPUR, 25th April, 1909.**

The Mussulmans of Mirzapur, at a public meeting held on the 25th of April, passed the following resolutions :—

1.—In view of the promises made by Viscount Morley, the Secretary of State for India, and His Excellency the Viceroy, for

a separate and exclusive representation of the Mahomedans in the Municipalities, District Boards, and the Legislative Councils of the Lieutenant-Governors and of the Viceroy, the Mahomedans of Mirzapur have read with feelings of great disappointment and surprise the telegraphic message of *Reuter* to the effect that His Excellency the Viceroy had lately recommended a mixed electorate and a system of nomination, and they strongly urge that such a course, if adopted, would practically mean a total denial to them of their right to be represented on the several assemblies.

2.—That in view of their past experience and the present state of feelings between the Hindus and Mahomedans, the Mirzapur Mahomedans, foreseeing the evil consequences which must necessarily flow from a mixed electorate, and from a doubtful and invidious system of nomination, and believing that the representation of Mahomedans under such conditions would be a representation merely in name, they would prefer that the Mahomedans of India should hold aloof altogether and leave to the Government and its official members to protect their interests as best they can.

### ALLAHABAD, 26th April, 1909.

Allahabad Mahomedans demand fulfilment of promise for adequate Mahomedan representation by separate Mahomedan electorates in all stages on Councils and boards, protest against mixed electorates and nomination which means their political annihilation.

### SAHARANPUR, 26th April, 1909.

Resolutions passed at a Meeting of Mahomedans of Saharanpur :—

1.—That this meeting emphatically protests against the method of additional representation of Mahomedans lately proposed by the Government of India and insists on a separate Mahomedan register from top to bottom. It views with distrust the action of the Government in going back from the promise which the Secretary of State made only a short time ago to concede the Mahomedan demand for a separate electorate in full and consider that the proposed modification will give rise to serious discontent among the Mahomedans.

## BENGAL PROVINCIAL LEAGUE, 26th April, 1909.

The following Resolutions were adopted at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Bengal Provincial Moslem League held on the 26th instant:—

1.—That this meeting views with grave dissatisfaction the scheme of Mahomedan representation foreshadowed by Mr. Buchanan in his speech on the second reading of the Indian Councils Bill, and is strongly of opinion that in order to secure adequate representation to the Mahomedans it is absolutely necessary that a fixed number of seats should be reserved for them, and that such number should be determined with due regard to their political importance.

2.—That this meeting is of opinion that the Mahomedans have little or no chance of being returned by a mixed electorate, and that the number of seats specially reserved for them in the recommendations of the Government of India is wholly inadequate, even in view of their numerical strength.

3.—That this meeting is of opinion that it is essential for the proper and effective representation of the Mahomedans that they be allowed separately to elect their own representatives.

4.—That this meeting is strongly opposed to nomination as a substitute for election in any Province in British India.

### MEERUT.

At a meeting of the Mahomedans of Meerut, presided over by Hafiz Hamid Hussain Khan, Rais and Honorary Magistrate, it was resolved:—

1.—At this meeting of the Mahomedans of Meerut respectfully but emphatically protest against the method of additional representation of the Mahomedans lately proposed by the Government of India and insist that Mahomedan representation should be by popular election.

2.—That this meeting views with great apprehension and deep disappointment the action of the Government in receding from the promise which the Secretary of State made only the other day to concede to the legitimate demands of the Mahomedans

for an entirely separate electorate and considers that the proposed modification is already giving rise to serious discontent among the Mahomedans as it defeats the very object of representative election.

3.—That a similar method of election by separate electorates should be extended to municipal and district board elections.

## SHAHJAHANPUR.

The Mahomedans of Shahjahanpur assembled in a public meeting expressed their sense of dissatisfaction and disappointment caused by the statement of the Right Hon. Mr. Hobhouse in the House of Commons about Moslem representation upon the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils and Municipal and District Boards in India. In their opinion no scheme of reform could be acceptable which does not provide for an exclusive Mahomedan electorate from the very beginning and at all the stages. Any modification of Lord Morley's pledge given in the House of Lords would cause extreme indignation and discontent among Mahomedans.

## GORAKHPUR.

The Mahomedans of Gorakhpur, in a public meeting resolved that mixed elections are extremely detrimental to the interests of their community, and that separate electorates on a denominational basis could alone satisfy the popular demand. It was resolved respectfully to pray the Government to fulfil the promise made by the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State.

## BASTI.

The Mahomedans of Basti assembled in a meeting on Friday resolved :—

1.—That this meeting views with great concern the recent ministerial statement in the Commons, favouring mixed electorates and giving Mahomedans only additional representation, and emphatically insists on the fulfilment of Lord Morley's pledges.

2.—That this meeting respectfully demands a separate electorate for Mahomedans, both on the grounds of numerical strength and political importance, from top to bottom.

Proceedings were wired to the Viceroy and Lord Morley.

## NETRAKONA, 27th April, 1909.

Resolutions passed at a Meeting of Mahomedans of Netrakona :—

1.—That in the opinion of this Meeting the Mahomedans will not feel satisfied unless separate electoral colleges be given to them as so justly promised by Lord Morley.

2.—That this Meeting views with consternation the proposal to appoint Mohamedan members by nomination, and considers such a step as retrograde and unjust, and also considers that such a step will cause the greatest disappointment and irritation among them.

3.—That any scheme not providing for the return of a definite number of Mahomedan members proportionate to their population and importance by election, will in the opinion of this Meeting be considered by the Community as a total disregard of its claims and interests.

4.—That the recall by Lord Morley of his promise *re* Mahomedans will in the opinion of this Meeting be putting a premium upon clamorous agitation.

## KAISARBAGH, LUCKNOW, 27th April, 1909.

The Mass Meeting of the Mahomedans of Oudh, to vehemently oppose the mixed electorate, was held in Kaisarbagh, Lucknow, on 27th April, 1909, under the presidency of Raja Sir Tasaduk Rasool Khan Bahadur, K.C.S.I., of Jahangirabad.

The following Resolutions were passed, the first being moved by the Hon. Raja Sir Ali Mohamed Khan Bahadur, K.C.S.I., of Mahmudabad :—

1.—Resolved that this meeting most emphatically protests against the statement made by Mr. Hobhouse in the House of

Commons on the 20th April relative to the method of Mahomedan representation, and it is of opinion that any modification of the pledge given by Lord Morley will give rise to extreme dissatisfaction among the Mahomedans.

2.—Resolved that in the opinion of this meeting no system of Mahomedan representation on the Provincial and Imperial Councils will be either effective in itself or acceptable to them that does not provide for an adequate number of seats in excess of their numerical strength, and for all such seats to be filled by election by exclusive Mahomedan electorates.

3.—This meeting is further of opinion that the principle of separate representation, together with the allotment of a sufficient number of seats in excess of their numerical strength, should be recognised for the Mahomedans in all other elections at all stages, *i.e.*, District Boards, Municipal Boards, Universities, &c.

4.—Resolved that this meeting expresses its entire confidence in the President of the London Branch of the All-India Moslem League, and fully agrees with the representations made by him in deputation to Lord Morley, as well as with the protest recently made by him, after the statement of Mr. Hobhouse.

5.—That this meeting is of opinion that unless the claims of the Mahomedans for a separate register and for the adequacy of their representation obtain full recognition, the reform scheme, far from being beneficial, must prove dangerous.

6.—That the proceedings of this meeting be wired to the Local Government, the Government of India and the Secretary of State, and be published in the newspapers.

### FATEHPUR, 27th April, 1909.

The Mohamedans of Fatehpur have passed a resolution to the effect that they regard Lord Minto's reply to the Mohamedan deputation at Simla in 1906 as an echo from the Throne, and hope their interests will be safeguarded and a due share of separate representation granted them under the Reform Scheme.

### AZAMGARH, 27th April, 1909.

The Mahomedan Association, Azamgarh, in an extraordinary meeting held on the 27th instant,



unanimously passed the following resolutions, and authorised the President to send them by express telegram to the Viceroy :—

The Association strongly protests against any modification of the principle that the Mahomedans should have substantial representation at every stage of election not only with reference to their numerical strength but also with regard to their political importance. The Association is also of opinion that all the seats so reserved for Mahomedans should be filled up by their special separate electorate, otherwise it might create much discontent and unrest amongst them. The Association strongly protests against any principle of nomination to be introduced for the Mahomedans in any form whatever. The Association prays that the above-mentioned resolutions be sent to the Secretary of State for India.

### **CAWNPORE, 28th April, 1909.**

The following Resolutions were passed at a Mass Meeting of the Cawnpore Mahomedans :—

In the opinion of this Meeting the reform scheme will not prove beneficial to the country if it does not provide for the separate election by Mahomedans, through all the stages, of their own representatives, proportionate to their numerical strength and political importance. That Mahomedans view with much apprehension the statement made by Mr. Hobhouse in the House of Commons, on 19th April, and consider it as destructive of the hopes which they formed on the express promises made by Lord Morley. Relying on British justice they still adhere to the hope that in the last reading of the Reform Bill their claims, as enunciated by the Moslem League, will be recognised in full.

### **BAREILLY, 28th April, 1909.**

A largely attended meeting of the Mahomedans of Bareilly was held on the 28th inst. The following telegram was sent to His Excellency the Viceroy :—

The Mahomedans of Bareilly, assembled in a meeting consisting of zemindars, ulamas, traders and pleaders beg to say that they are sadly disappointed to learn that the promises held

out to them as to their separate representation under the new reform scheme are to be modified. They unanimously beg to submit to His Excellency that nothing but separate representation will safeguard their interests.

## BHANDARA, 30th April, 1909.

The following Resolution regarding the Reform Scheme was passed at a meeting of Mussulmans held on Thursday, at Bhandara, C.P. :—

In the opinion of this meeting the right of separate elections at all stages should necessarily be granted.

## SYLHET.

At a meeting of the Anjumani Islamia, Sylhet, the following Resolutions were unanimously passed :—

The Anjuman thanks Lord Morley for his assurance that he would meet the demands of the Mahomedans and give them class representation of seats in excess of their numerical strength ; that this Anjuman considers that any departure from the above promise would cause greatest disappointment and irritation amongst the Mahomedans ; that this Association deeply regrets the unfair and unjust clamour of the Hindu agitators, and fervently hopes that Lord Morley will firmly stick to his words, and prays that he may be pleased not to overlook the just claims of the Mahomedans, whose loyalty is a valuable asset to the Empire.

## CALCUTTA.

*The Times*, Friday, 2nd May, 1909.

At a meeting of Mahomedans held at Calcutta on Wednesday, the Chairman, Nawab Bahadur Syed Ameer Husain, C.I.E., was instructed to send a cablegram to Mr. Ameer Ali, the President of the All-India Moslem League, London Branch, expressing the hearty thanks of the gathering to him for his able advocacy of the Mahomedan cause in connection with Lord Morley's reform scheme.

## NAGPUR, 3rd May, 1909.

The following Resolutions on the Reform Scheme were passed at a mass meeting of Mussulmans, held yesterday, at Nagpur, C.P. :—

That in the opinion of this meeting any modification of Lord Morley's pledges would prove prejudicial to Mahomedan interests, and that, with due regard to their political importance, separate electorates at all stages should necessarily be granted to them.

## ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE (London Branch) 6th May, 1909.

Resolutions adopted by the Committee of the All-India Moslem League (London Branch), 6th May, 1909 :—

1.—That this Committee hereby place on record their extreme regret and disappointment at the telegram from His Excellency the Viceroy communicated to the House of Lords by the Secretary of State on the 4th instant as being absolutely at variance with the repeated assurances by which the Mahomedan subjects of His Majesty were given to understand their demands for separate representation through all stages and in excess of their numerical strength were definitely and unequivocally conceded.

2.—That the Committee find it difficult to reconcile the arrangements proposed in the telegram “ that the Mahomedans “ should have by means of separate electorates a number of seats closely approaching that to which their numerical proportion in the population would entitle them and that over and above this they would obtain some seats in mixed electorates,” a hope which under present conditions does not appear to the Committee to be well-grounded, with the declaration of the Viceroy to the Mahomedan Deputation on the 1st of October, 1906, when his Excellency said as follows :—

“ The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a Municipality, a District Board, or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahomedan community should be repre-

sented as a community . . . and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community, and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you . . . ”

Nor can the Committee reconcile the suggested arrangements with the emphatic and solemn assurance of the Secretary of State in the House of Lords, on the 23rd February last, when His Lordship said :—

“The Mahomedans demand three things. They demand the election of their own representatives to these councils in all stages, just as in Cyprus, where I think, the Mahomedans vote by themselves. Secondly, they want a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength. These two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full.”

Whatever language may be employed to explain the present suggestions, the Committee fear the general impression among the Mahomedans will be that there has been a deliberate “going-back” from the assurances by which the Government had pledged its word to a loyal community.

3.—That the Committee regret profoundly the discrepancy between the views intimated in the telegram and the express promise made in the Commons on the 26th of April last on behalf of His Majesty’s Government by the Secretary to the Treasury

“that every endeavour will be made by the Government of India, and by the Government at home, to remove any sort or kind of obstacle which may be found to lie within our power to the carrying out of the pledges which have been given before this House . . . and that wherever elections are found possible they shall be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahomedan community.”

In view of the previous declarations and the unambiguous promise of the Secretary to the Treasury, as well as of the fact that separate electorates must be constituted for the few special seats reserved for Mahomedans, the Committee cannot help considering it unfortunate that the invidious and objectionable principle of supplementary elections by mixed electorates should be maintained, and that voting on separate registers through all stages should be summarily declared to be impracticable.

4.—That the Committee are apprehensive that the inconsistent and unsatisfactory manner in which the question of Mahomedan representation has been dealt with, will leave behind a rankling sense of injustice on the minds of the Mahomedan people; and they earnestly trust that the telegram of his Excellency may not be regarded as finally closing the issue.

12th May, 1909.

Resolutions adopted by the Committee of the All-India Moslem League (London Branch), 12th May, 1909 :—

1.—The Committee of the All-India Moslem League (London Branch), feel constrained to take respectful but strong exception to the official publication on the 11th May, of an isolated passage from a letter of the All-India Moslem League, dated the 4th February last, as they consider such publication is likely to confuse the issues, and to create wrong impressions on the public mind.

The present proposal of the Government of India is that the Mahomedans should have, by means of separate electorates, a number of seats closely approaching that to which their numerical proportion in the population would entitle them, and it is thought that over and above this, they would obtain some seats in mixed electorates, such as District Boards and Municipalities, Universities, Presidency Corporations, and as land-holders.

From the passage of the letter quoted in his Excellency's telegram, and now officially published, it is clear that the sub-Committee was assured that under the arrangements thus proposed, the Mahomedans would have ten seats on the Viceroy's Council, five by special electorates, and five "almost certainly," through mixed electorates. The Committee submit that the two points of view do not correspond, and that the assurance which elicited the gratitude of the Special Sub-Committee of the League on the 4th February is not identical with the proposals now put forward. This view is confirmed by a perusal of the whole of the letter in question as published in "The Times of India," of February 8th.

2.—The Committee beg to point out that on the 1st October, 1906, the Mahomedan Deputation to his Excellency asked for Mahomedan representation on exclusive Mussulman Registers; that on the 31st December, 1908, the All-India Moslem League at its full Session at Amritsar, adopted an emphatic and unequivocal resolution to that effect; that the special sub-committee of the Moslem League on February 4th, sent to the Government of India a representation endorsing the same view—this being the letter the Government of India now quotes an isolated passage from to



prove the contrary—and that since then the League has adopted other resolutions with very little variation from that position. The Committee submit that the expressions used in the letter of the 4th February must be read in conjunction with other portions of the document, and with recognition of the situation as it then existed.

The Deccan League on the 12th February, and the Madras League on the 14th March, the Punjab League on April 26th, the Central National Mahomedan Association on the 2nd May, adopted resolutions condemning mixed electorates. Since then, other meetings have been held at Dacca, Pubna, Moorsshedabad, Monghyr, and other places in Bengal, Lucknow, Rai Bareilly, Allahabad and elsewhere. The Committee are informed that copies of the resolutions have in every case been sent to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, although it would appear from the terms of his Excellency's telegram that the Home Department is not acquainted with their purport.

The Committee beg respectfully to point out that the Mahomedans in all the Resolutions hitherto adopted by them have consistently urged that, "wherever elections are found possible they should be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahomedan Community," and a suggestion to that effect is contained in the very letter of the 4th February last, from which the passage has been quoted by his Excellency supporting the scheme of an exclusive Mahomedan Electoral College, and repudiating mixed electorates.

With regard to the observation that elections on separate registers, as promised on behalf of His Majesty's Government by the Secretary to the Treasury, will require a "re-casting of the entire Bill, and increasing the maximum strength of the Councils," the Committee beg to draw attention to their case in the representation of the 16th April last, submitted to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, where this objection was anticipated and answered.

**21st May, 1909.**

Telegram from H.H. The Aga Khan, the President of the All-India Moslem League, to the President of the London Branch :—

Fully endorse London Branch League's Resolution 6th May proposed arrangement detrimental Moslem interests.



## ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE.

### General Meeting, Lucknow, 23rd May.

At a representative meeting of the All-India Moslem League to-day resolutions were passed, under the presidency of the Nawab Vikarulmulk, stating that the League viewed, with great dismay the Government's intention to limit separate representation, which it considers as a distinct departure from the pledges given, and is bound to create distrust of the British Government in the minds of Mahomedans. The League reaffirms its conviction that full, adequate, and effective representation of Mahomedans is only possible through the provision of separate electorates composed entirely of Mahomedan electors, for a number of seats assigned not only on the basis of numerical proportion, but also in accordance with the political importance of the Mohamedan population. The League is of opinion that such representation should be extended to municipal and district boards, and also records its appreciation of the valuable services which the Aga Khan and Mr. Ameer Ali have rendered as the trusted representatives of the League.

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## APPENDIX II.

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### EXTRACTS FROM SOME OF THE SPEECHES.

At a General Meeting of the Mahomedans held in Dacca on April 18th, 1909, in his opening speech the President, the Hon. Nawab Bahadur, Khaja Sir Selimoollah, K.C.S.I., said as follows :—

If this proposal—*i.e.*, that a few seats should be given to the Mahomedans communally and for further representation, they should take their chance with the Hindus—is adopted no Mahomedan, I am afraid, will ever get in under the second method, and the Mussulman representation will, in practice, become restricted to the few seats specially assigned to them communally. In other words the minimum representation will become the maximum and the whole thing will become a farce. Gentlemen, you will therefore see how essential it is for our community to insist that the Government should take steps to have a separate register for Mahomedan elections, and separate electorates for the election of Mahomedan representatives from top to bottom, and that the number of Mahomedan representatives should be fixed by the executive authority on considerations of policy, local conditions, &c., as we have repeatedly urged. It is essential, therefore, that we should elect our representatives absolutely separate for all purposes and that our representation should be substantial.

At the meeting of the Anjuman-i-Mussalman-i-Bengala (Association of the Mahomedans of Bengal) of which the Hon. Nawab Bahadur of Murshedabad is patron, held on the 23rd of April (*vide* Appendix I) the President, in his opening speech, remarked :

That in the opinion of the Anjuman, no scheme of reform will be acceptable to the Mahomedans which does not provide for separate election by them of their own representatives, and does not give them in view of their political and historical importance an adequate number of seats in addition to those due to them for their numerical strength.

That while thanking the Government and rejoicing at the generous policy of taking the Indian Community in its confidence, as shown by the appointment of an Indian as the Law Member, the Anjuman, at the same time, views with regret the non-appoint-

ment of a Mahomedan also to the Viceregal Executive Council, and earnestly prays for the appointment of a Mahomedan member to the said Council.

As regards the Hindus and Mahomedans, they were not the same people. They were not of the same religion and did not speak the same language, Hence where was the difficulty or objection to separate representation for the Mahomedans from among themselves. Therefore, he suggested it was necessary there should be separate voting, and that it should be for all purposes. The Mahomedans should be able to vote for District Boards and Municipal Boards, and for Councils, both Imperial and Provincial. They should ask the Government to consider whether separate voting was not necessary for the existence and well-being of the Mahomedan community. There should be a register for Mahomedan voters who should vote for Mahomedan members only. Mahomedan interests were identical with and depended upon the existence and maintenance of British supremacy in India. That was the reason of their loyalty. It was an intelligent loyalty. It was useless to vilify the Mahomedans, and charge them with moral cowardice, and being the enemies of the country with being time-serving and self-seeking. The Mahomedans were staunch supporters of the Government, because they welcomed the existence of a third power which held the balance evenly between Hindus and Mahomedans, prevented them from flying at one another's throats, protected their rights with justness and fairness, and, above all, prevented external aggression into the country.

After reading the remarks of Mr. Hobhouse, Under-Secretary of State for India, in the House of Commons, regarding separate Mahomedan representation, as well as the opinion of the Nawab of Dacca on the same subject, the President went on to say that any talk to the effect that, in proportion, the Mahomedans were getting more votes, was idle. So long as the Mahomedans had to take part in the general elections they would be hopelessly out-voted, and not represented by members of their own community.

Then there remained the question of nomination which did not serve their purpose either. There were two evils of nomination. In the first place, it was not always that the nominated member was the member who represented the views of the community or concerned himself in every way with the welfare of the community. Secondly, suppose the nominated member in the Council found himself in opposition to certain measures of the Government with regard to the Mahomedan community. In some way or other nomination affected Mahomedan interests injuriously.

Therefore, nomination alone was not sufficient for their interests. Suppose it was said nomination was very good for Mahomedans: would that extend to other communities also? They must protest against nomination. They implored the

Government not to yield to wire-pulling and to clamour, but to protect their interests and not to obtain quietness at the sacrifice of Mahomedan interests.

The following account of the great Mahomedan Meeting at Lucknow, held on 27th April, is taken from the *Indian Daily Telegraph* of 29th April:—

“No greater assemblage has ever been witnessed in Lucknow, and the unanimity of the proceedings, the enthusiasm which prevailed and the continuous bursts of applause which greeted the speakers all testified to the united front which the Mahomedans of Oudh are showing in the protection of their national interests. It was a remarkable political demonstration, which will not easily be forgotten. The religious leaders of the Shiah and Sunni communities occupied seats of honour, and some of them took an active part in the meeting. Among those present were: The Honourable Raja of Mahmudabad, K.C.I.E., the Rajah of Jehangirabad, K.C.S.I.; Rajah Naushad Ali Khan; Khan Bahadur Mumtaz Ali Khan; Mohammad Ali Khan; Thakur Nawab Ali Khan; Choudhri Murtaza Husain; Choudhri Kazim Husain; Choudhri Shefiqul Zaman; Sheikh Ghafurul Rahman; Sheikh Ehsan Husain of Subeha; Moulvie Abdul Majid; Moulvi Abdul Hameed; Moulvi Mahomed Aslam; Moulvi Abdul Bari; Moulana Shibli; Muftahid Aga Hasan; Syed Raza Ali Saheb Pesh Namaz; Moulana Ibn Hasan Saheb; Moulvi Abdul Aziz; Moulvi Nazir Husain Muftahid-ui-Asir; Moulana Najmul Hasan Saheb; Moulana Mahomed Baqar Saheb; Syed Mehdi Hasan Saheb; Choudhri Fida Husain; Nawab Ghain Bahadur; Nawab Mahomed Hasan Khan; Hakeem Nazeer Hasan Khan; Khan Bahadur Nawab Haider Mirza; Nawab Mashed; Nawab Shefi Ali Khan; Nawab Amjad Ali Khan; Nawab Mahomed Nawab; Nawab Kasim Ali Khan; Hakeem Abid Ali; Hakeem Baquar Saheb; Nawab Shah Mir Khan; M. Etisham Ali; Mirza Mahomed Abbas; and all the leading Barristers, Pleaders and Mahomedan *Raises* of Lucknow.”

In moving the first resolution (Appendix I., p. 47) the Honorable Raja Sir Ali Mohamed Khan, K.C.I.E., of Mahmudabad, said as follows:—

“Before I move the first resolution I should like to tell you, as clearly as I can, that it is far from our minds to oppose any class or community. The object of this meeting is simply to protest against the method of Mahomedan representation as outlined in the statement made by Mr. Hobhouse in the House of Commons, and to insist upon the fulfilment of the pledge given by Lord Morley to grant special electorates to Mahomedans. There is a misapprehension in some quarters that the creation of separate electorates will accentuate the differences between the two important communities in the country. I hold, on the

contrary, that it will minimise the chances of a conflict between them. The Mahomedans, being in a minority, are naturally anxious lest they should be swamped by the majority. In fact the majority ought to have shown some consideration for the interest of the minority, instead of blaming the latter for taking steps to make its position more secure. I cannot enlarge on this point just now, for want of time, and I ask your permission to introduce the first resolution."

Shams-ul-ulma Maulvi Shibli Nomani, in moving the fifth resolution, said that as an educationalist he had never before interfered in political affairs, but the importance of the occasion now demanded that he should throw in his lot with his countrymen. He did not wish to accentuate the already strained relations between the two communities. It seemed to him that there was nothing to be said in favour of mixed electorates, but, on the other hand, separate electorates would be useful to both parties. He urged that Mahomedans knew their own interests better than Hindus.

At the General Meeting of the Madras Presidency Moslem League, held on the 24th April, under the Presidency of the Prince of Arcot, K.C.I.E., Mr. Yakub Hasan, in moving the first resolution (*vide* Appendix I., p. 41), said as follows :—

"It is a patent fact that the essential features of the new reforms consist in the generous recognition of the claim that the people of India of all classes and interests should have a voice in the administration of the country, and in the words of Lord Minto himself, 'in a genuine attempt to treat it on more liberal and comprehensive lines than we have hitherto been able to follow.' His Lordship fully recognised that the real representation of the people can only be secured through their own voluntary agency. In paragraph 29 of the Government of India's Despatch, he observed (that in any scheme of extension which the Government might put forth) 'the principle to be borne in mind is that election by the wishes of the people is the ultimate object to be secured, whatever may be the actual machinery adopted for giving effect to it.' Special emphasis was thus laid upon the elective principle, and Lord Morley also wrote, to quote his own words, that he 'supports popular election instead of requiring to supply deficiencies by the dubious method of nomination.'

"And yet in the case of the representation of the Mussulmans of this part of the country, that 'dubious method of nomination' is proposed to be adopted. We shall, in that case, to all practical purposes, be shut out from participating in the benefits of those reforms which the whole country has welcomed with so much jubilation. We shall gain nothing, whatever, and shall remain exactly where we were at the time of the inauguration of the reforms.



“ Nomination is, of course, a very easy method of selection, and, therefore, it may be satisfactory to the Government. But it is not so to the people, and when there is ‘no great difficulty in compiling suitable registers,’ and when there would be ‘great advantages in the constitution of separate special electorates, we may in fairness ask the Government not to destroy the very spirit of the reforms by resorting to the doubtful method of nomination in our case.”













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